

erate General J. E. Johnston who, with only 55,000 men, harried Sherman in a series of hit-and-run engagements. When Johnston was replaced by John Bell Hood as Confederate field commander in July, Sherman pushed more easily into Atlanta and captured the city on September 22.

Sherman burned Atlanta and began a famous—or infamous—march to the sea, to Savannah, Georgia. His handpicked soldiers cut a sixty-mile swath of destruction through the rich Georgia countryside, living on the supplies taken from barns and smokehouses and destroying the rest. One Union soldier described the action brusquely: “Destroyed all we could not eat, stole their niggers, burned their cotton & gins, spilled their sorghum, burned & twisted their R.R. roads and raised Hell generally.”

Sherman himself wrote that his army had inflicted \$100,000 worth of destruction of which only about one-fifth “inured to our advantage” while “the remainder is simple waste and destruction.” On December 20, 1864, he was able to telegraph Lincoln, “I beg to present you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah, with one hundred and fifty guns and plenty of ammunition and also about twenty-five thousand bales of cotton.”

■ **The War in the East.** While the war in the West was being won by Union armies against widely dispersed southern forces, the war in the East, waged between the two capitals, Washington and Richmond, was a seesaw conflict. In the East the Confederacy had a concentration of troops and, more importantly, the military leadership of one of the most brilliant strategists in American military history, Robert E. Lee. As a tactician, Lee consistently proved himself superior to his Union counterparts—McClellan, Burnside, Halleck, Hooker, and Meade—and such southern victories as those at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville kept



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This Matthew Brady photograph of a Union dugout is only one of more than 5000 photos he took during the Civil War. The war photographer was another important feature of modern warfare first introduced in that war.

the hopes of the Confederacy high. Furthermore, in victory as well as in later defeats, Lee brought to the southern cause distinction and honor.

**The Union Generals.** Most of the Union commanders in the East suffered from the disease Lincoln diagnosed as “the slows.” Lincoln was forced to push and prod his generals with persistent, pointed, and sometimes exasperated suggestions. To McClellan he wrote, “If at any time you feel able to take the offensive you are not restrained from doing so.” He once asked General Joseph Hooker, “Have you already in mind a plan? If you have, prosecute it without interference from me. If you have not, please

inform me, so that I, incompetent as I may be, can try and assist you in the formation of some plan for the army." One by one the generals were removed.

In General Grant, who had proved his capabilities in the western campaign, Lincoln finally found a man who definitely did not have "the slows." Lincoln declared in 1864, "He is my man and I am his for the rest of the war." When his advisors warned him that Grant was a heavy drinker, Lincoln asked for the name of Grant's whiskey, declaring he wanted to send a barrel of it to his other generals.

**The Turning Point.** But before Grant took command of the eastern armies on March 9, 1864, the tide of battle had already turned against the South. Lee had twice invaded the North in hopes of delivering a crushing blow against the Union. At Antietam in 1862 and at Gettysburg in 1863, however, Lee's forces were repulsed. Both of these famous assaults followed significant southern victories, the Second Battle of Bull Run and Chancellorsville. In this last battle the South paid heavily for victory when Lee's strong right arm, General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, was accidentally killed by one of his own men.

The three-day Battle of Gettysburg broke the army of the Confederacy. The battle—and perhaps the entire war—reached a tragic climax when the Confederacy risked all to send 15,000 men, led by General George Pickett's brigade, straight into the center of the Union defense. It was glorious, brave, and hopeless. The Confederate troops were ripped apart by deadly rifle and artillery fire. Lee, with his forces riddled and demoralized, turned south knowing the Confederacy had died at Gettysburg. The simultaneous defeat of the Confederates at Vicksburg virtually insured the ultimate triumph of the North.

In Grant, Lee met an opponent who had superior resources and knew how to use them.

The skilled strategist met the determined fighter and lost. In the Wilderness Campaign of Virginia that marked the final year of the war, Grant lost more men in one month than Lee had in his entire army. Yet the Union armies ground relentlessly forward over thousands of corpses, pushing Lee south. Grant, like Sherman, pursued a scorched earth policy, ordering his aide, General Philip Sheridan, to burn the Shenandoah Valley so that "a crow flying over the country would need to carry his own rations."

**Appomattox.** Finally, surrounded and with retreat cut off, Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865. Armistead L. Long, Lee's military secretary, described the surrender:

It is impossible to describe the anguish of the troops when it was known that the surrender of the army was inevitable. Of all their trials, this was the hardest to endure. There was no consciousness of shame; each heart could boast with honest pride that its duty had been done to the end, and that still unsullied remained its honor. When, after his interview with Grant, General Lee again appeared, a shout of welcome instinctively ran through the army. But instantly recollecting the sad occasion that brought him before them, their shouts sank into silence, every hat was raised, and the bronzed faces of the thousands of grim warriors were bathed with tears.

As he rode slowly along the lines hundreds of his devoted veterans pressed around the noble chief, trying to take his hand, touch his person, or even lay a hand upon his horse, thus exhibiting for him their great affection. The general then with head bare and tears flowing freely down his manly cheeks, bade adieu to the army. In a few words he told the brave men who had been so true in arms to return to their homes and become worthy citizens.

## Review and Discussion

1. How did Lincoln's war aims change as the conflict proceeded? Why did this change occur?